22 June 2018

Census Topic Review
GPO Box 9817
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Minister,

RE: ABS Review of the 2021 Census Topics

I am writing to support the submission made by the Melbourne Disability Institute to the ABS review of 2021 census topics to include one question about National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participation. The question could be "are you a participant of the NDIS" or a similar question that can identify if the person is a participant of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The Summer Foundation works to solve the issue of young people in residential aged care (RAC). Around 6,200 young Australians live in RAC. Our Vision is that young people with disability and complex support needs live where and with whom they choose, with access to high quality housing and support options that enhance health and wellbeing and participation. Our Mission is to create, lead and demonstrate long-term sustainable systems change that stops young people from being forced to live in RAC because there is nowhere else for them.

In order to solve the problem of young people in RAC, we need to have a deep understanding of the issue and one of the major challenges is access to reliable data about the NDIS and the outcomes that are being achieved by participants. The lack of data about who is an NDIS participant hampers the accumulation of a high-quality evidence base about how to improve the NDIS and how to improve the interface between the NDIS and health. The inclusion of a question about participation in the NDIS will assist our research work and help us to develop informed policy positions that will maximise outcomes for people with complex needs.

In closing, the Summer Foundation strongly encourages the addition of a question about NDIS participation in future Census topics.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted text]